



**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicant: A. Stoyanov et al. Attorney Docket No.: WEYE121925/25324  
Application No.: 10/815,143 Art Unit: 1731 / Confirmation No: 8224  
Filed: March 31, 2004 Examiner: D.R. Cordray  
Title: BLEACHED POLYACRYLIC ACID  
CROSSLINKED CELLULOSIC FIBERS

**DECLARATION OF KATHY A. WELCH PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 1.131**

Seattle, Washington 98101

March 3, 2006

**TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:**

I, Kathy A. Welch, declare as follows:

1. I am employed by Weyerhaeuser Company as a Scientist.
2. I have read and am familiar with U.S. Patent Application No. 10/815,143 ("the '143 application").
3. I have read and am familiar with U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2003/0208859 A1 ("the Neogi reference") that published November 13, 2003.
4. Prior to the publication date of the Neogi reference, I conducted APPL Trial T-76 preparing bleached polyacrylic acid crosslinked fibers under the direction of Scott Stephens, Ph.D., an inventor of the subject matter claimed in the '143 application. The following describes the pilot line runs that provided bleached polyacrylic acid crosslinked fibers.
  - a. Southern pine kraft pulp (CF416) was crosslinked with polyacrylic acid (ACUMER 9932) using sodium hypophosphite (SHP) as a crosslinking catalyst as set forth on pages 78 and 79 of my laboratory notebook (Exhibit A and Exhibit B, respectively, attached to this declaration).
  - b. Polyacrylic acid crosslinked fibers were treated with a bleaching agent that was either hydrogen peroxide or a combination of hydrogen peroxide and sodium

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